

**CITY OF HARTFORD**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**  
**AND HUMAN SERVICES**

131 Coventry Street  
Hartford, CT. 06112



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**Contact: Rita Kornblum, Hartford Health Dept.**  
**(860) 547 1426 ext: 7188**

**HARTFORD, August 18, 2004** – One year ago, the City of Hartford Health and Human Services Department launched its Hip-Hop Fest, in an effort to promote non-violence. This year, the Department has a new focus, and has partnered with an area artist to raise awareness of asthma.

In August, the Department will host its second event, a Youth Asthma Rap Contest, in partnership with the Youth Art and Technology Center of the Community Renewal Team and Dr. Joe Arts, Inc. In the last 18 years, the number of people with asthma has more than doubled; more significant increases have been reported among poor, inner city residents.

The purpose of the contest is to increase education among young people on the signs and symptoms of asthma, a disease that is very prevalent in Hartford. People with asthma experience periods of breathlessness, wheezing, coughing and chest tightness; these periods are called attacks or exacerbation, some of which can be life-threatening. Hartford and other large Connecticut cities experience significantly higher rates of hospitalizations and emergency room visits for asthma than rural communities.

Youth between the ages of 13 and 18 are encouraged to enter the contest by returning a registration form, which can be obtained at [www.hartford.gov](http://www.hartford.gov), or at the Youth Art and Technology Center located at 1445 Main Street, Hartford. Interested youth can also call Rita Kornblum at the City's Health and Human Services Department at (860) 547-1426 ext: 7188. Registration deadline is Friday September 30, 2004.

All asthma rap contest participants will receive a packet in the mail ( upon registration) with information about asthma and further instructions about he contest.

First, second and third cash and trophy prizes will be decided by a panel of three judges, including a doctor, a radio personality and a local rap artist. Winners will be announced at an event to be held October 16, 2004. The first prizewinning rap will become part of a TV public service announcement to be developed by animated characters created by Joe Young from Dr. Joe Arts, Inc.

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